

# JAUNT Dispatch Procedures

December 18, 2006

**Dispatch Office Goal:** To meet or exceed the needs of our customers and the company by maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of the drivers' schedules and passenger trips.

The dispatch office is a critical division of JAUNT. Changes constantly occur within a Paratransit operation, most of which impact the dispatch office directly. Critical decisions are constantly made to keep the service running as smoothly as possible. Dispatch employees must be able to handle these "waves" of changes and decisions productively and to coordinate with each other and their co-workers outside that office. Coordination, cooperation, control and direction must be high priorities of all dispatch staff in order to provide a successful service to our customers and drivers.

Many tasks must be completed every day for the dispatch office to be successful. The service provided to our customers can be outstanding only if each dispatch employee completes his/her assignments in a cooperative and supportive climate. Each incomplete task, non- or mis-communication, lack of coordination, missed shift, etc. negatively effects our service level to our customers and increases the stress levels for both the drivers, dispatchers and other co-workers.

## General Procedures

The dispatch office will:

1. Provide a relatively quiet atmosphere permitting clear conversations with customers, drivers and other dispatchers.
2. Provide *necessary* information to drivers and passengers when needed.
3. Troubleshoot issues by first listening to customers or drivers to determine the problem and then working on finding the most effective solution.
4. Provide a clearinghouse of information with certain information "protected" from outside co-workers and passengers, providing only that information which helps them get the job done properly.
5. Be consistent in its operation.
6. For every canceled trip there should be a note in the Trapeze pop up box with an explanation on who canceled the trip.
7. Provide precedence to currently scheduled trips, will calls and same day calls, in that order. Same day trips should never negatively affect other passengers, driver's schedules or any other part of the operation unless cleared by a supervisor.
8. Provide quick responses to radio and phone callers. If dispatcher is on the phone and a driver calls in on a two-way radio, the customer should be put on hold to ensure the driver is responded to in a timely fashion.
9. Focus their energy on helping the operation work well and not on who may have made a mistake.

10. Communicate important details among the dispatch employees. If any dispatcher leaves the room, the remaining dispatchers should be able to carry on seamlessly due to the previous coordination and communication.
11. Provide a clear channel of complete information to driver supervisors with specific information about possible driver performance issues.
12. Always maintain at least two dispatchers in the office. If someone needs to leave the office with only one person, they must first call the Operations Manager or designee to provide someone to fill in.
13. Personal phones calls should not interfere with the dispatch operations, and should be kept at a *bare* minimum including cell phone usage also.
14. Begin their work duties and responsibilities at the shift start time through the end of their shift time.
15. Answer phones within 3 rings (Mon – Fri, 5:30 am to 5:30 pm) and within 5 rings at other times.
16. Manage Driver issues appropriately such as time off for that day by; 1. Directing drivers to see the Supervisor on duty for their approval, or if they are not available, make a judgment based on the impact on schedules, urgency and their ability to have told us sooner, then 2. If you make the decision, document details in an email to the Supervisors and Dispatchers including time going off and back on work, reason, etc. If a Supervisor makes the decision, they will communicate the same details to all dispatchers.

### **Specific Procedures:**

4:00 AM – 5:30 AM - Lead Dispatcher on duty will be responsible for the start of the day and will:

1. Check voicemail at the beginning of and throughout the shift.
2. Start computer to run Trapeze programs for the day.
3. Check van list to make sure that the van assignments are correct.
4. Check for unscheduled morning trips, and schedule them.
5. Reassign runs for changes such as drivers calling in sick, agency closures, etc.
6. Dispatch information to drivers in a calm manner via radio and MDC Center.
7. Assign vans as needed due to breakdowns or regular scheduled maintenance.
8. Check the Maintenance Board to ensure that vans scheduled for service are at JAUNT and not scheduled to go out until the work is complete.
9. Verify all morning drivers have started their runs.

5:30AM: 7:00AM- Lead Dispatcher on duty will:

1. Monitor Trapeze dispatch screen to track logons and identify problems such as drivers reporting late to duty.
2. Monitor MDC Center for messages from drivers including late or early runs, systems that are NAK status, no-shows, and login status and troubleshoot when needed.

3. Handle same day requests for transportation only if those requests do not interfere with the already-scheduled trips. Same day requests for return trips must be scheduled if they do not cause delays for already-scheduled passengers. Will calls are not allowed.
4. Check the vans assigned for the day on an hourly basis to troubleshoot problems.
5. Serve as backup dispatcher for Dispatcher #1.

7:00 AM to 9:00 PM- Lead Dispatcher will:

1. Monitor Trapeze dispatch screen and troubleshoot problems.
2. Monitor MDC Center for messages from drivers, late or early runs, systems that are NAK status, no-shows, and login status, etc. in order to take any required corrective actions.
3. Handle same day requests for transportation only if those requests do not interfere with the already-scheduled trips. Same day requests for return trips must be scheduled if they do not cause delays for already-scheduled passengers. Will calls are not allowed.
4. Check vans assigned for the day on an hourly basis to troubleshoot problems.
5. Schedule will calls.
6. Serve as backup to Dispatcher #1 or #2, as needed.
7. Adjust next-day schedules for any drivers notifying us they will be absent.
8. Communicate any *safety-related driver or passenger incidents* or issues with the Road Supervisor and/or the Safety and Training Manager *within five minutes* of notification.
9. Document details of *non-safety related incidents* or issues as they occur and notify the appropriate people or department *within an hour* of the incident.
10. Check voicemail periodically throughout the shift.
11. Save all next days manifests to Q:\EVERYONE\Backups
12. Check with the drivers who are still out to make sure that they are running ok and are not having any problems before you shut down dispatch computers.
13. Power Down all appropriate equipment before leaving the building.
14. Use of the elevator after business hours is restricted to need-only use. If you can use stairs, use the stairs.
15. End of night - Secure the building by making sure all the exit doors and windows on perimeter are closed and locked. The Administration door between the reception area and hallway must also be closed before setting the Admin. alarm. Set the Operation's alarm.

5:30 - 14:00 Dispatcher #1 duties will include:

1. Dispatch information to drivers in a calm manner either by radio and MDC Center
2. Serve as backup on the radio when Dispatcher #2 arrives at 7:00 am for duty.
3. Run Slack Time Report every two (2) hours and use the information to efficiently place moved or added trips.

4. Notify the Lead Dispatcher and the other dispatcher to ensure that will calls are assigned to those with slack time and closest to the trip.
5. Run Crozet Report to ensure that the appropriate number of buses is running in Crozet.
6. Check the vans that have been assigned for use that day on an hourly basis.
7. Monitor the runs to check those running late or early.
8. Answer phones as backup for the Lead Dispatcher until 7:00 AM.
9. Serve as backup Dispatcher #2 after 7:00 AM.
10. Respond to customers' questions and needs.
11. Schedule will calls.
12. Monitor the MDC Center for messages from drivers, for runs that are running late or early, for runs that are in NAK status, for no-shows, and for login status and take any required corrective action.
13. Check voicemail periodically throughout the shift.
14. Coordinate and hand over duties to Dispatcher #3 until 3:30 PM (at that time Dispatcher # 3 will take over the duties of Dispatcher #2).

7:00 AM to 3:30 PM-Dispatcher #2 will:

1. Cover the radio and MDC Center in order to send information to drivers and answer drivers' questions in a calm manner.
2. Notify the Lead Dispatcher of any problems. If the Lead Dispatcher is not available, discuss the problem with the other Dispatcher.
3. Check the vans that have been assigned for use that day and for vans running early or late on an hourly basis.
4. Schedule will-calls as they occur, communicating with other the dispatcher and Lead Dispatcher.
5. Monitor Trapeze Dispatch screen to troubleshoot and take any corrective action required.
6. Monitor the MDC Center for messages from drivers, late or early running vans, runs that are in NAK status, no-shows, and login status and take any corrective action required.
7. Hand over the dispatch duties to Dispatcher #3, who will assume the duties of Dispatcher #2.
8. Monitor the Dispatch queue (passengers should not be on hold for longer than one minute) and serve as backup for the phones, as needed.
9. Coordinate and hand over all Dispatch duties to the Lead Dispatcher or the Night Dispatcher at 5:30 PM.

These procedures are not meant to be exhaustive in describing all Dispatch responsibilities though it is meant to cover the majority of tasks. If there are tasks not listed or if any change please let the Operations Manager or Assistant Director know for future updates.